THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET
CHRONICLE

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Website to receive new design

Redesign team to assemble to improve PUC website for marketing, usability reasons

Richard Chambers
News Editor

Meetings have begun for the purpose of gathering perspectives about the problems and potential of the PUC website and forming a Web Redesign Task Force. After meetings in February, this task force will work based on suggestions to improve the appearance, content and organization of the site.

Kris Falzone, interim associate vice chancellor for marketing, said the website's design, which is several years old and out of date in Web terms, should be made competitive with the designs of other educational institutions. She may incorporate surveys and focus groups or open sessions into her research during February.

Falzone expects the redesign to be complete by the end of the semester or soon after it. The timeline corresponds with her marketing goal of preparing the site for the summer search by prospective fall students.

"So it's a pretty aggressive timeline – especially for a university," Falzone said.

Falzone expects the interim time to be divided into forming the initial updated designs by the end of March, testing the designs in the first half of April and refining in the last half. The task force will consist of administrators, staff, faculty, an SGA representative and student representatives from the different colleges.

Falzone said a major problem with the current site is that its design is not intuitive. The site contains much information, but it is not in places visitors expect to find it. She said items for which visitors look may be inside a series of several pages, so the visitor may need to already know the steps to take.

"In a best-practice world, the way people measure their experience with a website is, 'How many clicks did it take from the home page?'" Falzone said.

Falzone said long series of pages quickly frustrate visitors and might reduce the number of both prospective students and community members who will become involved with PUC.

Adam Cooper, president of the SGA, has been attending the meetings. He spoke of his difficulty finding the plan of study for his major in accounting. He suggests the plan be accessible from the College of Business page, not letting the search engine to be the easiest place to find it.

William Law, dean of the College of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, said he has been working for about nine months to improve consistency just within his department's Web content. He believes that the effort should expand across the colleges and agrees with Falzone that the effort will be most efficient if everything is done together.

Law said the prior layout was more unclear than it is now to students and prospective students because each set of major requirements and lists of faculty were different between departments, even departments as similar as mechanical engineering and electrical and computer engineering.

"And I don't think through any intent to make it unfriendly. It was just because everybody kind of thought their site was the best thing," Law said.

Law gave the example of a student who wanted to take a mathematics course and a biology course. The student would find the information for the first course and then would visit the biological sciences pages to look in the same place and would not find the same sort of information.

Law asked his departments to make core information consistent.

"There should be a sense of sameness on an institution's website – for information, at least. So—and I think most of the colleges agree with that principle," Law said.

Law has not heard much student feedback on the changes his college has made, so he has formed a Student Advisory Council and asked it, for one of its tasks, to have students navigate the website and report what was easy or difficult to find. He has ensured some of these same students are involved in the university-wide redesign project.

Falzone identified the scrolling news feature, the sparing use of social media and the scarcity of images as other drawbacks to the current design. She said, since the process should be open, she will not point to specific models to follow or features to add, but she suggested the site, in general, would probably benefit from more images, more news and more highlights of faculty, staff and student accomplishments.

Cooper suggested the PUC directory be updated to include students.

photo illustration: Virginia Eib

Author Arnold August sees 'democracy in motion' in Cuba, Venezuela

Richard Chambers
News Editor

Arnold August, writer and lecturer from Canada, compared democracy in Cuba and Venezuela to that in the United States in a presentation on Feb. 5 in the YJean Chambers Hall.

August said that Fidel Castro's 1959 rise to power occurred through democratic means. He criticized U.S. journalism for not making people aware that Cuba continues to have elections.

August argued against claims that the United States has the ideal democracy because the nation operates under a Constitution that was written and ratified by a small minority.

August said he opposed the nation's distinction between felonies and misdemeanors. He said the distinction targets minorities and harms democracy because those convicted of felonies cannot vote for life.

August praised Venezuela's system that in 1998 elected Hugo Chavez president and in 1999 led to a new Constitution. He said elections continue to be trustworthy in Venezuela.

August called for more accurate media in the United States.

Associate professor Kathleen Tobin, scholar of Latin American history, agreed that U.S. called for listeners to seek our fairer media.

"Often issues such as continuing free education and access to health care for all are the goals. Cubans and Venezuelans who support equal access in these areas consider their efforts highly democratic and a U.S. system that fosters education and health care only for people 'who can afford it' as highly undemocratic," Tobin said.

August called for fairer media coverage. He observed that what many in the United States think of as democracy is the type based on private property, whereas nationalization policies are democratically supported in Cuba and Venezuela.

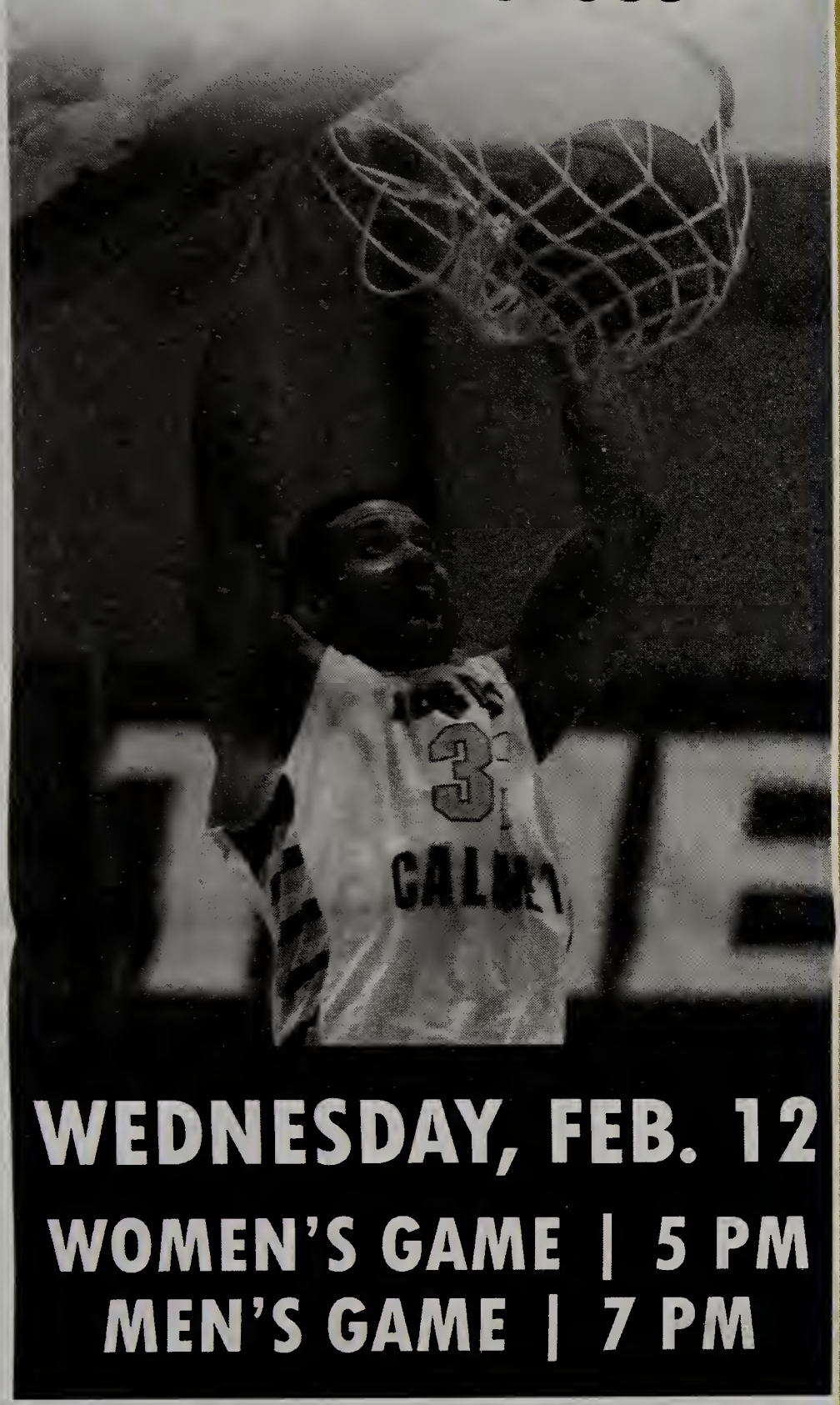
His recent book is titled "Cuba and Its Neighbors: Democracy in Motion."

Lee Artz, communication professor, organized the presentation.

Up And Coming

To find more upcoming events go to **purduecal.edu/calendar**

PURDUE CALUMET VS. HOLY CROSS

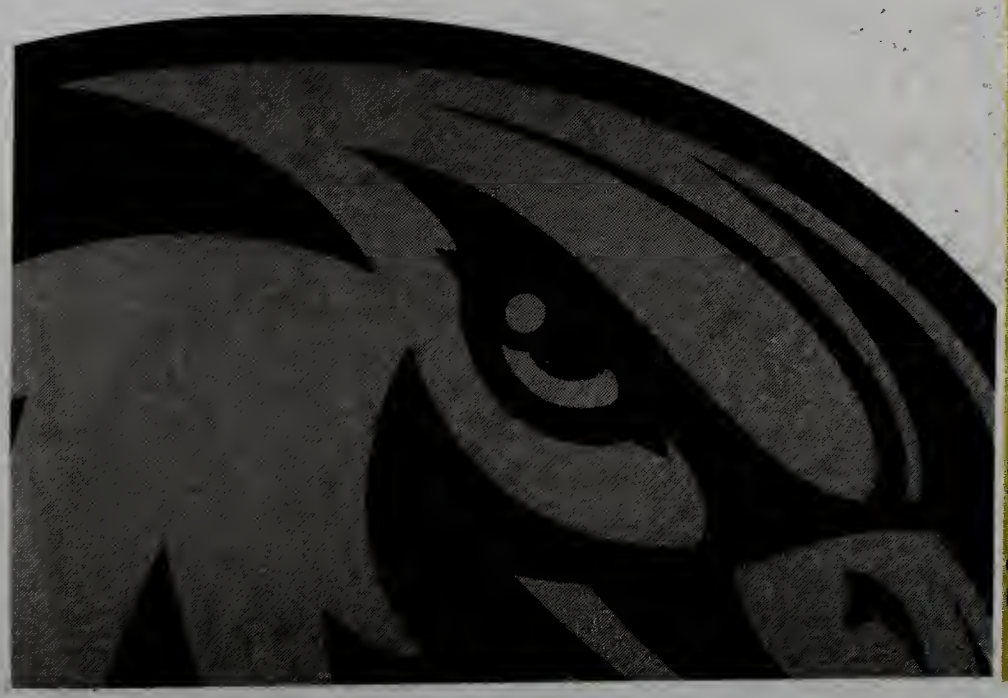


WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12

WOMEN'S GAME | 5 PM
MEN'S GAME | 7 PM

FREE PIZZA

FOR STUDENTS IN BETWEEN GAMES



Twenty percent refund ends
•Feb. 10
Posted by: Anne Agosto-Severa

Movie Monday: "Romeo and Juliet"
Posted by: Student Activites
•Feb. 10

Emergency Preparedness: Tornados
Location: SUL, TV Room
Posted by Student Activites
•Feb. 3, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Tomodachi Anime Organization Meetings
Location: SUL, Room 321
Posted by: Student Activities
•Feb. 11, 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
The club meets every Tuesday from now until April 29.

Free yogurt with toppings
Location: CLO, Concourse
Posted by: Student Activites
•Feb. 12, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Women's basketball game versus Holy Cross
Location:Fitness & Recreation Center
Posted by: Student Activities
•Feb. 12, 5 p.m.

Men's basketball game versus Holy Cross
Location: Fitness and Recreation Center
Posted by: Student Activities
•Feb. 12, 7 p.m.

Valentine's week chocolate bat sale
Location: CLO, Concourse
Posted by: Jessica Groen
•Feb. 13, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Game On: Wii Fun & Games
Location: SUL, Calumet Falls
Posted by: Student Activities
•Feb. 13, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

McNair Luncheon Form Series & Research Presentation
Location: SUL, Room 150D
Posted by: Omar Diaz
•Feb. 13, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Don't Forget the Lyrics
Location: SUL, Calumet Falls
Posted by: Student Activities
•Feb. 18, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Thesis Formatting Workshop
Location: CLO, Room 155
Posted by: Anne Agosta-Severa
•Feb. 18, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

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Schererville resident hosts Northwest Indiana's first Comic-Con

Jacob Yothment
Office Coordinator

The first Comic-Con to be held in Northwest Indiana will take place at Villa Cesare on 900 Eagle Ridge Drive in Schererville on Feb. 23

Brian Grabinski, show runner and Schererville resident, hopes to offer attendees all the elements of bigger Comic-Cons, but on a smaller and more affordable scale.

"I am making this show affordable for people who wanted to go the bigger shows but could not afford it," Grabinski said.

Adult ticket prices are $6. In comparison, prices at Wizard World Chicago Comic-Con range between $40 and $60 depending on which day people attend , and i attendants buy in advance. Tickets for children, senior citizens and veterans who bring proper identification are $3 at the convention.

VIP guests will include Cory Hamscher, an artist who worked for Marvel Comics and Devil's Publishing; Matthew Waite, an artist who worked for Valiant Comics, and Hilary Barta, an artist who drew for "The Simpsons" and "SpongeBob SquarePants."

Due to monetary issues, Grabinski could not afford to bring the high profile actors one might see at Wizard World Chicago Comic-Con, such as Stan Lee, former president of Marvel Comics, and Norman Reedus ("The Walking Dead").

The International School of Comics, Sun Bros Studios and NWI Film Network will each host speaking panels at the convention. The panel of the International School of Comics will discuss programs offered at the school, and offer professional portfolio reviews for people planning a career in comics. Sun Bros Studio's panel will offers information about the best ways to launch a line of comic books. The NWI Film Network's panel consists of four Indiana filmmakers: Justin Wolters, Tre' Manchester, Paul Celestin and Sarah Moore. The four filmmakers will discuss their latest works and discuss the process of filmmaking in Northwest Indiana.

The event will include, a silent auction. All proceeds will go to benefit the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana, Goodwill Industries of Northwest Indiana Inc., the Humane Society Calumet Area and Northwest Indiana Cancer Kids Foundation.

James Rhone, owner of Creative Comics in Griffith, believes people should attend due to the large panel of guests, and to help benefit the charities.

"In the 11 years I have been in the comic business, there has never been a show like this," Rhone said. "It's one of the hardest- worked conventions I have seen in recent years. You can help a lot of charities."

Rhone will host a tournament of HeroClix, a game involving the use of pop-culture themed figurines. Participants will have the chance to win HeroClix bricks, booster packs that contain figurines and cards.

Rhone has also reserved a table at the convention where he will be selling comic books, toys, action figures, cards and other store merchandise.

Aside from Creative Comics, other dealers of action figures, apparel, comic books, games and video games in attendance will include Amazing Fantasy Books and Comics, First Aid Comics, Happy Day Comics, Next Dimension Games, Otaku Hobbies and the Vintage Video Game Guys.

photo: Jacob Yothment
Northwest Indiana Comic-Con will take place at the Villa Cesare located at 900 Eagle Ridge Drive in Schererville

"Almost all the stores in the area will be there," Rhone said. "It's like visiting all local stores at once."

Two cosplay contests, one for adults and one for kids, will take place at the convention. Cosplay involves dressing as a character from a book, movie, video game or comic book. First place earns $100, and second place receives $50.

Lauren Rapciak and Jessica Cwik, who are known for cosplaying the X-Men characters Rogue and Scarlet Witch, will be the two judges for the contest.

Grabinski started planning the convention in early 2013. The event was announced on Sept. 15, and local businesses reserved all 80 tables by November.

Grabinski hopes to host more conventions in Northwest Indiana in the future.

"I'd like to make the convention bigger and better as time goes on," Grabinski said. "It's all based on the success of this show. If this show is a success, then we can push for a bigger one."

The first 500 attendants will receive free comic books from Big Dog Ink, and K-Hits 104.3 will have a table with free prizes and giveaways.

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